



August 10, 2005

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New Microwave Link to Moab Regional Center

By Doug Chandler



Bald Mesa Tower

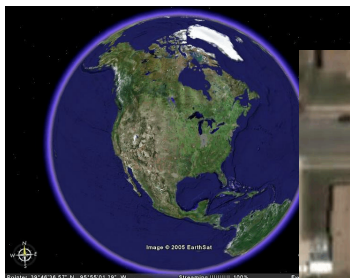
Al Higgs is leading a team of field techs this week in the removal of one of the last analog microwave paths in the state's network; Bald Mesa to the Moab UDOT shed. In order to make better use of the connectivity, the Moab end of the path is being moved from the UDOT shed (where a single phone line is being provided), to the Moab Regional Center, in order to provide more bandwidth to the Wide Area Network Hub located in that facility.



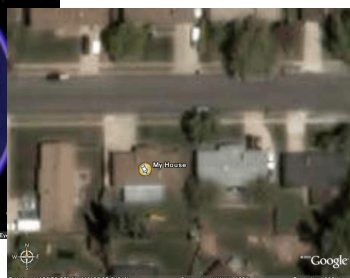
Bald Mesa Satellite Image

The new microwave is a Harris Farinon [Constellation](#) 28T radio. A 28T radio runs at 45 Mbps (Mega bits per second), and is roughly equivalent to 700 simultaneous phone conversations. Most of the new microwave hops being added or upgraded to the state's microwave network are Optical Carrier 3 (OC3); 155Mbps; over 2,000 simultaneous phone conversations.

The state's facility in the satellite shot (above right) is the largest white building. Note the cable bridge attached to the tower, just left of the building. Of course from the top view, you can't see the tower very well, but you can see the black shadows of the microwave dishes on the ground next to the tower. If you're interested in an excellent, free satellite application, I suggest [Google Earth](#). You can smoothly zoom from a global magnification, right down to an image of your house. When I zoomed down to mine last night, I noticed the metallic roof of my back porch needs painted again. Be advised: you'll want a relatively fast connection to the internet.



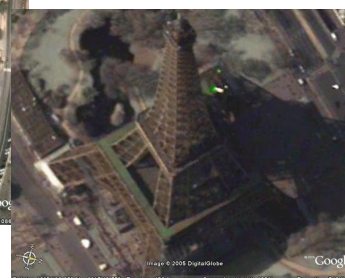
Google Earth



My House



Utah State Capitol



Eiffel Tower

IT Consolidation Version 2.0

By Boyd Webb, Strategic Network Planner



Consolidate.

Is it just me, or is everyone talking about the consolidation of State IT resources under the new Department of Technology Services? 'Merit', 'non-merit', and 'at-will', are the buzzwords driving the discussion, but everyone knows employee reclassification with the possibility of redeployment is just the tip of the iceberg.

The objectives behind consolidation aren't necessarily bad, but consolidation itself is being presented as an entirely new concept in state government. The fact is, many people working for ITS today were involved in the consolidation of State IT resources mandated by the legislature in the early 1990's. Having already watched the movie once they have a pretty good idea about how the sequel plays out.

The twist in this years attempt at making "Government work like Wal Mart" is the non-merit reclassification requirement for employees transferred into the new department. Employees are being enticed to voluntarily surrender job security with financial incentives, but if that doesn't work, less creative methods will likely be used. Reclassification to non-merit AT status apparently isn't a question of 'if', but 'when'.

And it's not that I have anything against the free market system here in the good old U.S of A., but government really is different. The things that make Wal Mart so successful in a competitive business environment don't always work in a public service oriented government environment. Wal Mart, and the gazillions of other successful businesses in the public sector are for-profit enterprises. It really doesn't matter how much the public wants unprofitable services from business; if it doesn't make money it's gone, period, end of discussion. State and local Governments, on the other hand, regularly build and maintain infrastructure in support of a handful of taxpayers without any possibility of recovering the project costs much less turning a profit.

To be fair, HB109 promotes several long overdue changes in the operational structure of IT services in Utah State Government. I'm actually looking forward to many of the opportunities that have yet to materialize. I'm a person that generally embraces change with enthusiasm, but it has to make sense. I guess that's what it really boils down to for me. I'm here because I think I can make a difference, and if I ever lose that motivation, it's time for me to go play somewhere else -whether my employee status is 'merit', or 'non-merit'.

Communications - A Vital Role

By Bill Sipes, Senior Network Planner

I attended a meeting yesterday in Moab regarding the proposed Willow Basin communications site. There were representatives from a number of different agencies, about 10 people all together, who had varying interests in this proposed site. There were folks from the Moab City Council, power company, Forest Service, Grand County Sheriff, Moab Fire Chief, homeowners group, environmental consulting company, and a couple of others that I haven't a clue where they were from. I have also attended several other meetings regarding other proposed sites in other parts of the state. I had an opportunity to take a Black Hawk helicopter ride to a couple of mountain tops with a couple of radio techs from the military. I have spoken with several emergency services people that are very eager to talk about the various communications projects that ITS has on the docket for FY05 and FY06.

The overriding concern of all these people is the communications capability of the state. The State of Utah has developed a communications network that is second-to-none in the country, with leading edge technology and a high degree of dependability. The integrity of the wireless network is the

primary focus of these strategic planners who are working hard and long to improve and enhance the state's communications capabilities.

Those in the state that are charged with emergency response to any number of possible calamities all desperately need those wireless services provided by this network. With the various systems being installed; Mobile Data, OmniLink, 800 trunking, LES/SRS systems, and other systems related to emergency response, it gives these emergency responders the capability of organizing their people, coordinating the needed activities, facilitating the appropriation of needed equipment, and the ability to oversee these activities in an orderly and efficient manner.

Nothing is more important to these 1st responders than to be able to communicate effectively to the various groups and organizations responding to any number of emergencies that can, and often do, occur in our society. The Law enforcement community, the various fire departments, the Health and Human Services departments, the various special teams like HazMat, SWAT teams, bomb specialists, and numerous other teams within various organizations share the most critical challenge of all: keeping everyone on the same page.

Most of us, as average members of this society, haven't a clue of all the various infrastructure critically needed to keep us moving from day to day and able to move about in our particular realm in relative safety.

This, in large part, is due to effective and reliable communications.



700 MHz Update

By Boyd Webb, Strategic Network Planner

700 MHz may be in the future for wireless public safety communications, but it isn't in the present for many state and local government agencies in the United States. Incumbent television stations often block the implementation of new public safety operations in the recently allocated public safety spectrum. Federal Communications Commission rules require the migration of existing TV operations to digital technology using frequencies that don't interfere with public safety, but the action has been delayed pending challenges from the National Association of Broadcasters.

Two senate bills have been introduced that will empower the FCC to clear the public safety allocation as early as January 1, 2009. Senator John McCain is leading the effort with a bill he introduced in June that proposes to accelerate the digital transition requirement for TV broadcasters. Broadcast advocacy groups are actively opposing the legislation.

Region 41, which encompasses the State of Utah, is fortunate to have only a few conflicting TV stations statewide. Cooperation with the Utah Education Network, and other broadcasters, has allowed the State of Utah to deploy a statewide mobile data solution using frequencies in the new public safety allocation.

Calendar

CANCELLATION NOTICE: The State 911 Committee meeting for August 18th has been cancelled due to state bid extension requests for 911 equipment. We want to have a contract in place so we can review actual grant costs for approval in the September meeting.

UWIN Governance Board

Friday August 12, 2005

10:00 am - noon

State Office Building Room 5112

UCAN Meeting

Tuesday September 20, 2005

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: VECC

5360 South 5885 West

Salt Lake City _____

911 Committee

Thursday September 15, 2005

10:00am - Noon

Rampton Complex

4501 South 2700 West

UHP Large Conference Room

Utah Sheriff's Association 10th Annual Conference and Exposition

St. George Dixie Center

September 11-13

[Conference Link](#)

Editor

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